A series of twelve letters by John Bowen on Poor-law reform published in *The Times*, 1837-8
then published by him as a pamphlet
Edited by Tony Woolrich
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LETTER XII

" I vow to God I would sooner bring myself to put a man to immediate death, **and** so to get rid of him at once, than to fret him with a feverish being, tainted with the jail-distemper of a contagious servitude, to keep him above ground, an animated mass of putrefaction, corrupted himself, and corrupting all about him."

Burke.

SIR,—It is essential to a right understanding of some additional facts, by which I purpose to exhibit, the compendious evils of the destructive system, adopted by the Board and the Commissioners, that I should briefly advert to some circumstances connected with the Medical Relief of the Poor, in the Bridgwater Union. And it is thus essential, because there is nothing, except the daily bread of the poor, which is so intimately connected with their necessities, as the bearing skill and knowledge of the Professional men who have to afford them assistance under the diseases and accidents to which they are so peculiarly liable. " Every attempt at unduly depressing the condition of such men is an indirect attack on the suffering poor, whose very existence depends on Professional assistance being rendered with that promptitude, and continued with that perseverance, which nothing short of Professional zeal can supply" Under this conviction I proceed to state that on the formation of the Union, the resident Practitioners of the Town and neighbourhood were employed to attend the poor, at a low rate, with an understanding that, the experience obtained in the first year, should be a guide for determining the amount of their future remuneration. At the end of their engagement, in June 1836, the Medical Officers declared that they could not, in justice to the poor and to themselves, continue their charge at the salaries proposed, and required a more liberal remuneration for their further services. This the Board thought proper to refuse, and advertised, throughout the Kingdom, for strangers to come and oppose the established professional men of the district who had received the public commendation of that Board for their zealous and able services[1] One stranger, who was brought from the other extremity of the Kingdom, by these advertisements, was employed for the Bridgwater district, including the Union Workhouse, at £17. 11s. 9d. per annum less than was asked by resident Medical men. The person so employed, produced the following epitome, of his pretensions, as his *card ;* from one of which, duly treasured among the documents of the Board, the following is copied.

"Mr. John Rodney Ward, Graduate in Medicine and Surgery of the University of Leyden, and Member of the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries in London ; late *Consulting Surgeon* Accoucheur to the Royal Maternity Society Doctor's Commons; *Surgeon* to the Royal Infirmary for Diseases of Children; *Consulting Surgeon* Accoucheur to the Southwark Childbed Society Guy's Hospital, and Honorary Member of the Physical Society Guy's Hospital, &c. &c[2] At home for Consultation on all Diseases incident to Women and Children every morning from 8 till 12 o'clock, and evenings after 7 o'clock. Advice gratis, on Tuesdays and Saturdays, from 8 till 10 o'clock. 60, Pilgriin-street, Newcastle-upon-Tyne."

The managers of the Board plumed themselves beyond measure, at having attracted to Bridgwater this constellation of dignities, from Newcastle, by the tempting bait of £130. per annum. Thus, to add £17. 11s. 9d. a year to their *savings,* they deprived the diseased poor of the important advantages to be denied from a united Medical staff, well known to the whole neighbourhood, generally disposed to assist each other, and intimately acquainted with the wants, habits, character, and circumstances of the laboring population.

The attention of the public having been called to the ravages of Diarrhoea, in the 'Workhouse, by my

publication on the subject, it appears to have been determined, on the accession of the new Medical dynasty, that no more persons should die of Diarrhoea, in that house. Several persons who had been reduced to a most distressing state by that disease, were carried off, after being entirely racked out. On referring to the Obituary, and to the Medical Weekly Return, in which the Medical Officer is directed to "insert *the cause and circumstances* of every death among the paupers under his caremy attention was particularly called to the following entries, among others of a similar character, from a knowledge that, the unfortunate subjects of .these entries had long been severe sufferers from Diarrhoea.

Date of Death,	Names.	Age.	Alleged cause of Death in Medical Weekly Return.	Alleged cause of Death in Obituary.
1837. July 25th.	Pocock, James,	80	debility of old age,	natural death.
28th.	Tucker, Mary,	76	debility of old age,	ditto ditto.
October 11th.	Perry, Henry,	86	old age[3]	natural decay.

Believing that these entries did not truly record " *the cause and circumstances"* of the deaths of these poor old creatures, I applied to the Governor, the Matron, and the woman who had attended them up to the time of their deaths, for *their* account. From the united evidence of those persons, in which there was not the smallest discrepancy, it appeared that Diarrhoea had returned with great violence on these miserable sufferers, and carried them off. The Matron's account was to the following effect, and fully borne out by others.

Mr. Ward said, for some time, that there was no such thing as Diarrhoea in the house: then he said they were all cases of Diarrhoea returned, and that he would send me some astringent powders, of which I was to give two or three a day, as occasion required. I did do so, until Mr. Ward told me not to give any more, as the powders had lost their effect: and that he would send something else. After that he sent some draughts which I gave occasionally.

I told him Mary Tucker's was an old case of Diarrhoea returned. He ordered me to give Tucker powders, which he called astringent powders. I used sometimes to give them twice or three times a day : at last they lost all power ; Tucker was quite lost in her head ; lay in a terrible mess without knowing it, and was changed continually by Mary Reed.

James Pocock, too, died of a return of the Diarrhoea; confined to his bed, unable to help himself. He was lost to everything; his motions passed without his knowing it; for some time before his death, we used to change him three or four times a day.

Henry Perry died in a horrible state, from a return of Diarrhoea He was very bad indeed; confined in bed by Diarrhoea some weeks; as soon as he was clean it was only to clean him over again.[4]

But this is not the only evidence- This Consulting Surgeon, in repeated entries, records the presence of Diarrhoea, and then reports the Deaths, for the information of tbe Board and the public, as having been occasioned, not by disease, but by *age*. Your readers, Sir, are desired to form their own estimate of the credit due to the alleged cause of death in this abode of misery, when the fatal termination of such protracted cases of disease as the foregoing is officially ascribed to "old age." Such deceptive documents, instead of throwing any protection over the lives of the helpless persons immured in these pestilential dens, serve only to conceal the truth and mislead the public. But it may be said that these entries having been made in the prescribed *form*, by

the claimant of so many Professional distinctions, the Board had a right to presume that they were *correctly* made. Be it so. Let these false entries stand for nothing more, than an example of the utter worthlessness of such records, and a proof that the actual ravages of Diarrhoea materially exceeded the official returns.

In proceeding to exhibit the fatal consequences of the course pursued, it may not be irrelevant to state, that the inquiry on my allegations was not a solitary example of such mockery. The Medical Association of this place published, certain charges imputing cruelty and neglect to the Board, to which publication the Committee affixed their names. These gentlemen offered to substantiate their charges by evidence, and some of the Guardians who assisted at the enquiry, strongly urged the necessity of permitting them to do so.

" This proposal," the Medical men say, " so evidently essential to the cause of justice, was overruled by the Assistant-Commissioner, who proceeded to examine the Relieving Officers, and such two or three other parties only as these interested persons brought forward. * * * Not only are the parties accused of these cruel proceedings made judges in their own case, contrary to every principle of justice, but they are permitted to judge in private, with closed doors, and allowed to determine that not a single evidence should he called likely to convict themselves. For what avowed purpose was this paid servant of the public, this Mr. Assistant– Commissioner, sent down ? Did he avow that lie was sent to smother all proceedings, to cut off all hope from the suffering poor of having their wrongs enquired into? Did lie avow that his object was to make out u ease which would elude justice, and screen the guilty from opprobrium? Did he make such avowals ? No, he stated that he should be at Bridgwater; and ho avowed that he should be there ' for the purpose *of instituting an enquiry* into the charges brought against the Board of Guardians by the Medical men.' And how does this public functionary act upon this recorded avowal, circulated hy authority among the Guardians ? W hy, he refuses to call a single evidence likely to make out tbe truth of the charges :—and this, remember, is a hired servant of the public, eating the bread of the people, and employed to enquire and to report![5]

While this mockery was pending, Mr. Weale, *the official enquirer,* was a visitor at the house of one of the *managers* of the Board, who, on the following morning was the mover of a resolution, doubtlessly concocted between them, acquitting the little knot of Master Shallows who had contrived to mislead the Board, and in the true bobadil style referring the matter to no less a jurisdiction than that of—Parliament[6]- Thus the prompt enquirer into, and the redresser of the injuries of the Poor, the man "whose duty" Lord Ho wick says, "it was to punish all instances of neglect," not only makes a mockery of this duty by refusing to hear evidence, but outrages the public sense of justice by ostentatiously identifying himself with parties implicated. This disgusting display was, of course, followed by that determined perseverance in wrong, which a sense of impunity never fails to engender in vulgar minds. Every thing was left by the Commissioners to Mr. Weale, and Mr. Weale could manage every thing for his good friends and companions at the Board. Such is my Lord Howick's *responsible* tribunal, set up to redress the wrongs of the suffering poor ! But it is only by a recurrence to other cases in which the lives of the poor have been sacrificed, that the consequences of these audacious proceedings can he estimated.

Previously to entering on these further sacrifices, it is proper to observe that, ' having considered the course adopted by the Board, in

the pretended enquiry into my allegations, entirely precluded me from again acting with them, I no longer attended the Meetings of that body. Towards the end of December last, having seen several pauper funerals pass my window, I called at the old Workhouse to obtain some information on the subject. I was there informed that some frightful disease had, in a short lime, swept off many of the old inmates. On inspecting the Minutes of the Board, the Medical Weekly Return, and the Visitor's Book, I found that not the slightest allusion had been made to this terrific visitation. Even the Obituary, out of **ELEVEN DEATHS,** consecutively recorded, only contained **TWO ENTRIES in** the eolumn headed " Reference to Surgeon's Book," and in one of these two cases, the death was ascribed to *natural decay!* On enquiring into all this suspicious concealment, it appeared that on the 3rd of November the inmates of the House were unusually free from disease. On the 4th, a wandering Vagrant, lousy, itched, and in a high fever, described as follows, appears for the first time in the "Medical Weekly Return," among the helpless old inmates of the Workhouse, who had no opportunity of escaping beyond the reach of infection.

Name.	Age.	Disease.	Observations.
Briffet, John,	28	congestion of brain	This man will in all probability not recover.

Briffet did however ultimately recover; but James Rosehill, a poor man who was appointed to attend on him, was seized *with the same disorder,* and died after a few days illness. Another poor man, George Parish, who nursed Rosehill, was seized in his turn, and was carried off with four other persons; all declared by the Governor, the Matron, and the woman who assisted in nursing, to have been seized in nearly the same manner. It providentially happened that this terrific disease, so wantonly introduced, broke out among the aged poor just as the Board were on the point of removing the inmates to the New Union Workhouse, otherwise the consequences might have been too frightful to contemplate, as all who were seized perished, with one exception.[7]The dates of seizure and of death are as follows.

Names.	Age.	When seized.	Died.
Rosehill, James, (nursed Briffet)	57	November 24th.	December 14th.
Jarman, Edward, ...	75	November 29th.	December 24th.
Gill, William, ...	76	December 2nd.	December 7th.
Watts, Esau, ...	74	December 4th.	December 11th.
Starkey, Nieholas, ...	85	December 4th.	December 7th.
Parish, George, (nursed Rosehill)	58	December 19th.	December 27th.

It will scarcely be believed that, the records of the Board contain no observations, directly or indirectly, bearing 011 this appalling visitation; by which six of our unfortunate fellow creatures were carried otT in twenty days. Thus, while the Regulations, under which the poor were gruelled to death, were

declared from the Chair t.o be *imperative;* those, unfavorable to the ravages of Pestilence, were considered a dead letter. The destruction of a litter of curs could not have been passed over with more indillerence. No enquiry, either by Inquest or otherwise, was instituted, and the seizure of the poor victims is merely noticed in the Medical Weekly Return, as follows.

Names.	Nature of Disease.	Days when attended.	Observations.
Rosehill, ...	Congestion of the head.	From Nov. 24 to Dec. 13	Dead.
Jarman, ... Gill,	Determination of blood to the head.	Nov. 29 to Dec. 21 Dec. 2nd to the 7th	- - -
Watts, ...	Ague.	Dec. 4th to the 12th	Dead.
Starkey, ...	No disease.	Dec. 4th to the 7th	- - -
Parish, ...	Inflammation.	Dec. 19th to the 27th	Dead.

It should be observed that in the cases of Rosehill, Jarman, Watts, and Parish, there are second entries under the head of " Nature of Disease." The other two victims have not another word given to them, neither is the existence of that unsparing pestilence by which, the Governor, Matron, and Nurse, declare these victims were carried off, alluded to in any manner whatever! The order for the Medical Attendant "to *record* and to *report* without delay to the Board of Guardians, the *cause and circumstances* of every death which may take place in the Workhouse" is thus treated with profound contemn! Out of the above six deaths which took place in 20 days, under such appalling circumstances, only three of them are carried out in the column for " observations" as being *"dead"*. The other three are managed to be lost sight of by this monopoliser of Metropolitan distinctions. One of the victims, poor Gill, a decayed tradesman, who was nearly blind, has neither disease nor death marked against his name, and another, who was seized on the 4th of December and died on the 7th, has, marked against him, " NO DISEASE" but not the slightest notice is taken of his death in that return where, the death, the "*cause and circumstances*" are directed to be entered by the Medical attendant. Thus while the *savings* of the Board are secured by all the elaborate contrivances of treble inspection, check and vouchers, there are no vouchers considered necessary, by the Managers of that Board, for the due expenditure of the lives of these helpless creatures. They are first immured beyond the reach of public control, exposed to the poison of malignant fever, consigned to the care of any stranger who happens to be the lowest bidder; and then passed to their graves without a reckoning !

I will not trust myself with any remarks on these mysteries of yon "Prison House;" or ask *why* the *managers* of the Board connived at all this concealment. If I were to do so, they would most probably be *again* directed to sit in judgment on themselves. The Honorable P. P. Bouverie might *again* declare in print, that the Board of Guardians is the *"ONLY TRIBUNAL"* by which such atrocities "*could* be enquired into." Mr. Weale might *again* receive orders "to institute an enquiry," and after junketting with the other parties implicated, might, concoct a verdict of acquittal, and offer to thrust some garbled details of the dark transaction into the chaos of a *general* Parliamentary enquiry. I will not, willingly, become a party to an audacious mockery, calculated to inflict an indelible disgrace on my Country, and to effect the enormous mischief of impressing the minds of the People with the dangerous belief that, they must not look to authority for the redress of injuries. To this fatal conclusion my unhappy brethren must inevitably

arrive, if such disgusting mockeries as have been already exhibited are to be substituted for substantial justice.

But the frightful event thus slurred over without notice by these *Guardians* of the poor, is not a solitary example of the consequences of that sanction given by the Poor Law Commissioners, to the practice of exposing our helpless fellow creatures to the poison of malignant diseases. This new element of Workhouse eonomy has, under official patronage, expanded itself into a fruitful source of wealth. The New Union Workhouse, although it has only been in operation a few weeks, has contributed liberally towards another £4712. 11.1d. by the death of no less than **thirteen** helpless creatures between the 17th of January last and the 1st of March ! Upwards of **fifty** persons have been returned at one time, as laboring under various diseases; exclusive of a still greater number of concealed cases, being mostly those of Children confined to their beds by a violent eruption.[8] The Nurse, which the Board was at length induced to hire, (only on the 26th of January last;) lies at this moment in Typhus Fever caught in the performance of her duty.In addition to Inflammatory Sore Throat and Congestion of the Brain, terminating fatally, there are, entered in the weekly reports of Mr. John Rodney Ward, a sufficient variety of fevers to furnish employment for a new School of Nosologists. There is " fever." "fever (simple)." "inflammatory **FEVER." "SCARLET FEVER." "FEVER WITII ERUPTION." "FEVER WITH COUGH." "FEVER WITH DEBILITY." "FEVER WITH GREAT DEBIL1TV ." "TYPHUS FEVER." "PUTRID FEVER." &C. &C.**

And, to the eternal disgrace of human nature, he it staled, that into a house thus infested with some of the most formidable Plagues which ever assailed humanity, the helpless poor of the Bridgwater Union, containing forty Parishes, were ordered, when, in a season of terrific pressure, they implored relief from the united attacks of cold and hunger. Thus, a fraudulent advantage was taken of starvation wages and a winter of awful severity, to set up the apprehension of pestilence as one of the *tests of destitution.* The operation of this infamous system may be contemplated in the following abstract.

Week's ending.	Persons ordered into the House.	Persons admitted.	No. on the Sick List.	No. in the House.
1838.				
January 19th,	- 44 -	- 9 -	- 21 -	- 200 -
– 26th, - -	- 25 -	- 8 -	- 50 -	- 195 -
February 2nd, - -	- 16 -	- 6 -	- 54 -	- 191 -
– 9th, - -	- 73 -	- 14 -	- 35 -	- 191 -
– l1th, - :	- 17 -	- 18 -	- 37 -	- 206 -
– 23rd, - -	- 13 -	- 14 -	- 59 -	- 223 -
March 2nd, - - -	- 15 -	- 6 -	- 62 -	- 225 -
	- 203 -	- 75 -		

Thus, with an unexampled variety of Fevers, with an average of nearly 50 on the Sick List, and no less than thirteen deaths in about six weeks, upwards of 200 of the suffering poor who asked for bread, were ordered into a house so infested ! Here we have the true " Workhouse test of destitution," sanctioned by authority, and reduced to practice !

The requisite instructions arc equally brief and compendious. Employ the cheapest Medical aid you can procure;—get the Typhus Fever, and an assortment of other Plagues into your Workhouse ;—be careful that no Medical survey be allowed;—call no second advice or assistance;[9] thus may your Fevers stand a better chance of having a clear course, and your returns be easily *managed.* In addition to the *direct* savings of this system by deaths, you will find, if your Fevers happen to work well, that even under the pressure of the most inclement season, out of 203 applicants for bread, 128 may be so terrified, by your offering them this new *test of destitution,* that they will prefer begging, pilfering, or famishing out of the house, to the more immediate destruction by Pestilence which threatens them within.

Here is a practical explication of the principles which the Poor Law Commissioners deliberately established by sending a charge of blood-guiltiness to be enquired into by the very parties implicated in the crime;—by officially expressing their " *satisfaction"* at the self-acquittal of these parties, without having seen one word of the evidence ;—by withholding the report of their Assistant on the fatal transaction ; and by neglecting to express any disapprobriation on the misconduct of those persons whose *wilful* perseverance in wrong brought so many of their helpless fellow creatures to an untimely grave. By this course of conduct deliberately adopted, the Poor Law Commissioners I repeat, virtually said to all the Boards of Guardians in the Kingdom ;—if you have a highly infectious and fatal disease raging in your Workhouse, send in as many of the helpless poor as you can to be subjected to the deadly infection ; and if any complaint should be made of their having been got rid of in this way, we will refer the charge to yourselves. Examine such witnesses as you *" think necessary,"* and when you have acquitted yourselves, as you will of course do, we will express our *entire satisfaction* at the verdict, and hush up the whole affair by refusing to grant any information on the subject.

Such is the lesson deliberately taught by the Legislative assembly of Somerset House. The fatal results having been carefully copied from then own records; it now remains to be seen, how long the lives of our helpless fellow creatures are to be entrusted to *irresponsible* mercenaries, who have adopted for their principle of action, not only the spirit, but the very letter of Timon's malediction.

> Let the famished flesh slide
> from the hones Of the
> Needy ; *or prisons swallow*
> *them,*
> *find diseases lick up their bloods.*

Bridgwater, March the 11th , 1838.

P. S. Having brought the foregoing series of harrowing facts down to the present day, I now, Sir, offer You my grateful thanks for having enabled me to proclaim these fatal outrages to an extent which could not otherwise have been effected. I do likewise beg to offer my acknowledgments to the Conductors of other departments of the Public Press, who, while they differ widely in political opinion, have agreed in promulgating the foregoing statements, in the most liberal and disinterested manner. For this zealous co-operation and generous confidence, I can make no other return than to declare, that although I have already given scrupulous attention to the matter detailed, I hold myself bound to justify the confidence of the Public Press, by entering on a re-examination of any statement made by me which may be questioned by competent authority.

J. B

[1] The Medical Officers, in a written communication to the Board, "distinctly declare that they have no wish, individually or collectively, to receive anything beyond a moderate remuneration for their attendance on the poor ; the amount to he determined alter a fair enquiry on the extent and nature of their past services. To prevent the poor from suffering by the delay consequent on the course taken by the Board of Guardians, the Medical Officers are ready to continue their professional attendance on the poor gratuitously, until some other arrangement can be made, provided such arrangement be effected within a reasonable period." This liberal offer was rejected, and they were requested to take charge of the poor on the terms of *Private Patients,* until further advertisements could be issued and replied to. Being asked what would be their charge, it appears on the Minutes of the Board that the Medical men stated, that under such circumstances, ' their charge would be the same as in the case of any other Private Patients. Payment of these bills, made out on the principle selected by the Board, was refused, and the following resolutions stand in the Minute Book.

"Moved by the Honorable P. P. Bouverie, That to those of the Medical Officers who are now under contract to the Board, a tender be made for their services for the three weeks that intervened between their first and second contract, at *double the rate* for which they have contracted for the remaining 49 weeks of the current year.—Carried.

Minute Book, Friday, October 27th, 1837."

This singular resolution was carried, as it is said, by a majority of *one !* But to obtain the services of Professional men on *one* principle, and then, having received all the advantages of these services, to turn round and offer them payment on *another* principle, which was never even alluded to at the time of agreement, seemed to be going *rather* too far, even for the Board of Guardians, as may be inferred by the following.

" Minute Book, Friday, December 15th, 1837.
Moved by Mr. John Dalley, and seconded by Mr. W. P. King, That the resolution passed at this Board, on the 27th of October last, concerning the bills of the Medical Officers while they attended the paupers as Private Patients, from the 24th of June to the 14th of July last, *be rescinded,*—Carried.

[2] The "British Medical Almanack" for 1837 has neglected to publish Mr Ward's name among those of the Metropolitan Consulting Surgeons; but it has, possibly by mistake , inserted the name of J. R. Ward, at the bottom of the list of *Assistants* of the "Royal Maternity Society." Perhaps this is an error of the press, in the Almanack, and CONSULTING Surgeon, should be read instead of ASSISTANT Surgeon? The Gentleman himself should surely know.

[3] The entry of "death by old age," in an Obituary, or a Medical Journal, leaves the reader to presume the absence of active disease. An acute writer on mortality well observes, that "few, even of the oldest, die purely from gradual decay. Some positive disease usually comes on and overwhelms the small remains of vitality." That overwhelming disease in the above cases, was the Diarrhoea, by which the whole house was infested, while the official entries are calculated to delude the public into a belief that those poor victims died from " old age."

[4] Most of the cases of Diarrhoea which proved fatal in the Penitentiary, after the introduction of the gruel system, were stated by the Physicians to be cases of Diarrhoea "returned."

[5] *FACTS CONNECTED WITH THE MEDICAL RELIEF OF THE POOR IN THE BRIDGWATER UNION*. PUBLISHED BY J. W. RUMSEY, WELLINGTON STREET, STRAND, LONDON.

[6] In both these mock enquiries the secret concocters of the resolutions, after acquitting themselves, slink behind Parliament. One scarcely knows which to admire most, the easy assurance displayed by thus evading the question, or the gross

ignorance exhibited of the functions of Parliament. Parliament does not sit as a Court for persons accused to exculpate themselves before. As well might the Burkers have referred the charge against them, to the Committee then sitting on tbe Anatomy Bill. Parliament is instituting an enquiry, not for tbe punishment of offenders, but for the amendment of a Law. " If," said the first constitutional authority of the Realm, " if the habit were to prevail of carrying offences, real or supposed, into the legislative bodies, who shall establish themselves into courts of criminal equity, (so the star chamber has been called by Lord Bacon,) all the evils of the star chamber are revived. It signifies nothing whether a Court for this purpose be a Committee of Council, or a House of Commons, or a House of Lords ; the liberty of the subject will be equally subverted by it. The true end and purpose of that House of Parliament which entertains *such a jurisdiction* will be destroyed by it.'

[7] This awful disease appears by the Governor and Matron's description, to have been somewhat similar to that which carried oif Mr. Smith, one of the Relieving Officers of the White Chapel Union. On the Coroner's inquest, which was held on February the 16th, Mr. Head, the Parish Surgeon of White Chapel, deposed, that the deceased was attacked by fever, caught in the discharge of his duty. After a few' days, determination of blood to the head took place, which brought on delirium. Another Relieving Officer was stated by the Coroner to have died of violent fever, caught in the discharge of his duty, in the Stepney Union. The Parish Surgeon of White Chapel further deposed, that a number of the Nurses in the Poor Houses had died from fever, and it was a singular fact that *scarcely one of them* who had been attacked by the disease had recovered.

[8] *Under this entry, is written by a Visiting Magistrate,*

" I went round the house with Mr. Ward, the Medical Officer, on the 31st of December, and found that no less than 63 children were afflicted with the Itch, some of them in a great degree.

H. PARSONS."

Thus, the *regular* Visitor of the day declares the inmates to he "generally healthy," and the Medical Attendant conceals the existence of a disease in which it is discovered by a *casual* Visitant, that no less than sixty three poor children tire laid up !

[9] When disease appeared among the Convicts in the Penitentiary, two extra Physicians were appointed ; and soon after, a general Medical enquiry instituted: but this was for Convicts! The helpless poor, when assailed by pestilence, are left to the solitary care of the lowest bidder; who may, without incurring the slightest notice of the Board, slur over the Deaths in the Workhouse, in any manner which may happen to be the. most convenient